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1 – PNM foes: Pollution controls over the top, ABQ Journal, 1/5/2015

<http://www.abqjournal.com/521740/news/pnm-foes-pollution-controls-over-the-top.html>

Questions about whether Public Service Company of New Mexico is adding costly pollution-control technology that critics say isn't required by regulators at the coal-fired San Juan Generating Station could be a key issue in regulatory hearings that began Monday in Santa Fe. PNM contends the technology is required by the state and federal governments, but a top state environment official disputed that in a Dec. 9 email.

2 – Shaken more than 560 times, Okla. is top state for quakes in 2014, EE News, 1/5/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060011066>

Oklahoma had a fivefold surge in earthquakes last year, making it by far the most seismically active state in the Lower 48. The Sooner State was shaken by 564 quakes of magnitude 3 and larger, compared with only 100 in 2013, according to an EnergyWire analysis of federal earthquake data. California, which is twice the size of Oklahoma, had fewer than half as many quakes.

3 – Duncan Bans All Outdoor Watering as Waurika Lake Levels Continue to Fall, StateImpact, 1/5/2015

<http://stateimpact.npr.org/oklahoma/2015/01/05/duncan-bans-all-outdoor-watering-as-waurika-lake-levels-continue-to-fall/>

The drought in southwest Oklahoma has lingered for more than four years now, and it will take more than a wet end to 2014 to stop it — a lot more. Despite receiving above average December precipitation, the City of Duncan will ban all outdoor watering beginning next week.

4 – Raw Gas Fuels Worry for Rural Homeowner, Texas Tribune, 1/6/2015

<http://www.texastribune.org/2015/01/06/something-witty-about-smelling-or-passing-wet-natu/>

A stiff winter wind smacks into the plate-glass windows of Jon Salis' Lake Palo Pinto home as six space heaters work overtime to keep it warm. Natural gas used to keep his 2,100-square-foot house cozy. In fact, Atmos Energy's gas service was one reason Salis decided to remodel a lakeshore cabin about 80 miles west of Arlington, and move here in 2001.

5 – 3rd Man Dies of Injuries From Oklahoma Oil Rig Explosion, Tulsa 8 ABC, 1/5/2015

<http://www.ktul.com/story/27761814/3rd-man-dies-of-injuries-from-oklahoma-oil-rig-explosion>

A third man has died of injuries suffered in a December explosion at an oil rig in southern Oklahoma. The wife of Mark Pittman told reporters that Pittman died during the weekend at an Oklahoma City hospital where he was taken following the Dec. 19 explosion and fire at the rig near Coalgate. Two workers died in the blast and subsequent fire and two more were injured.

6 – Amid a New Swarm of Quakes, Researchers Head to Irving, State Impact, 1/5/2015

<http://stateimpact.npr.org/texas/2015/01/05/amid-a-new-swarm-in-quakes-researchers-head-to-irving/>

A team of seismologists heads to the North Texas town of Irving today. Like some other Texas towns, Irving has experienced scores of small earthquakes lately, nineteen since last September, and the city is hoping to figure out what's behind the shaking. The upsurge in quakes started in Texas around the time the oil and gas boom took hold several years ago.

7 – Oil extends drop below \$50 as U.S. stockpiles seen rising, Fuel Fix, 1/6/2015

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2015/01/06/oil-extends-drop-below-50-as-u-s-stockpiles-seen-rising/>

Oil extended losses below \$50 a barrel amid speculation that U.S. crude inventories will expand, exacerbating a global supply glut that's driven prices to the lowest level since April 2009. Futures fell as much as 3.1 percent in New York, declining for a fourth day. Stockpiles in the world's biggest oil consumer probably rose by 750,000 barrels last week, a Bloomberg News survey shows.

8 – EPA Launches New Rule To Rescind GHG Permits, Vows Enforcement Relief, Inside EPA, 1/5/2015

<http://insideepaclimate.com/climate-daily-news/epa-launches-new-rule-rescind-ghg-permits-vows-enforcement-relief>

EPA plans to finalize by the end of the year a new rule for rescinding Clean Air Act permits for sources that triggered the requirements due solely to their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, a step the Supreme Court held to be unlawful, while also vowing to limit enforcement against entities that are currently subject to such permits.

9 – Regulators weigh proposal to close part of New Mexico plant, Odessa America, 1/5/2015

http://www.oaoa.com/people/health/article_4f06bb4e-8abf-5ed9-b9e0-4cca6117eaa1.html

New Mexico regulators began taking testimony Monday on a plan that calls for shutting down part of an aging coal-fired power plant that provides electricity to more than 2 million people in the Southwest. The plan would curb haze-causing pollution at the San Juan Generating Station, but some environmentalists argue it doesn't do enough to wean the state's largest utility off fossil fuels.

10 – Big threat for Obama's climate efforts from GOP-run Congress, ABQ Journal, 1/5/2015

<http://www.abqjournal.com/521593/news/big-threat-for-obamas-climate-efforts-from-gop-run-congress.html>

President Barack Obama's determined efforts to combat global warming face their biggest trial yet as Republicans take full control of Congress this week. The GOP vows to move fast and forcefully to roll back his environmental rules and force his hand on energy development. The GOP's first order of business: the Keystone XL pipeline. The Republican-led House has repeatedly passed legislation to approve the pipeline, which would carry tar sands oil from Canada deep into the United States. The bills died in the Senate when Democrats were in control, but that will change Wednesday when a Republican-led Senate committee holds a Keystone hearing.

11 - Texas, Calif. throw their weight around on power plant regulations, Climate Wire, 1/5/2015

<http://www.eenews.net/climatewire/stories/1060011064>

The caricatures of the swaggering, independent Texan and the elitist, trend-setting Californian are on full display in the otherwise dry, technical comments the two major economic drivers submitted on U.S. EPA's Clean Power Plan. The states have unapologetically taken starkly different routes in transitioning to a cleaner energy future: California charging ahead with laws and regulations meant to move markets, and Texas eyeing natural gas and wind power for their cash potential as well as their environmental benefits.

12 - Environment: Hearings set for proposed EPA smog rules, Summit County Voice, 1/5/2015

<http://summitcountyvoice.com/2015/01/05/environment-hearings-set-for-proposed-epa-smog-rules/>

The public will have a chance to weigh in on a proposed EPA rule to cut smog at three public hearings set for late January and early February. In November, the agency unveiled its proposal to lower the standard from 75 parts per billion to as low as 60 ppb.

13 - Calvey wants to continue to keep Oklahoma air and water clean, 1/5/2015

http://www.edmondsun.com/news/calvey-wants-to-continue-to-keep-oklahoma-air-and-water/article_78106136-9546-11e4-947c-03ee28d4403a.html

To properly manage legislative proposals assigned to the Environmental Law Committee by listening to stakeholders is state Rep. Kevin Calvey's goal as committee chairman, he said. "Oklahoma generally has clean air and water, and we would like to keep it that way," said Calvey, R-Oklahoma City.

14 - Fort Smith Settles Clean Water Act Violations With \$255 Million Plan, KUAR, 1/5/2015

<http://ualrpublicradio.org/post/fort-smith-settles-clean-water-act-violations-255-million-plan>

Arkansas's second largest city, Fort Smith, will embark on 12-year, \$255 million upgrade to its sewer and water treatment operations as part of a settlement regarding a decade of Clean Water Act violations. KUAR's Jacob Kauffman talked to the Environmental Protection Agency's chief of the Municipal Enforcement Branch Loren Denton about where untreated waste ended up and the prospects of cleaner water.

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This is an aerial view of the San Juan Generating Station in northwest New Mexico. (Albuquerque Journal file)

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By [Kevin Robinson-Avila / Journal Staff Writer](#)

PUBLISHED: Monday, January 5, 2015 at 11:45 pm

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Questions about whether Public Service Company of New Mexico is adding costly pollution-control technology that critics say isn't required by regulators at the coal-fired San Juan Generating Station could be a key issue in regulatory hearings that began Monday in Santa Fe.

PNM contends the technology is required by the state and federal governments, but a top state environment official disputed that in a Dec. 9 email.

Under an agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, PNM is seeking Public Regulation Commission approval to shut down two of San Juan's four generating units and to install pollution controls on the remaining two units to meet federal haze regulations.

But environmentalists and clean-energy advocates say PNM is going beyond what the EPA or the state Environment Department require to meet air quality regulations by proposing to install two distinct pollution controls on each of the generators that continue to operate at San Juan — one that reduces haze and a second that reduces particulate emissions.

Some of the utility's critics argue that all four of the coal-fired units should be shut down and the power replaced with renewables. In essence, they're now saying PNM's proposal is "greener" than it has to be to meet air quality regulations.

Close scrutiny of the "balanced draft" issue is expected in the San Juan hearings that began Monday, and in PNM's new rate case if the investment is approved by the PRC, said Steve Michel, chief counsel for Western Resource Advocates.

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"Balanced draft may produce environmental benefits, but it's not required under any law or regulation," Michel said. "PNM asked to have it in their permit. It's a fabricated need."

By doing so, the total cost for new technology at San Juan will rise from \$41 million if PNM simply meets EPA requirements to \$157 million for all the controls the utility proposes. That's according to PNM cost estimates included in its filings with the PRC.

Much of those costs will be borne by New Mexico ratepayers.

PNM says both controls – which include selective noncatalytic reduction (SNCR) and balanced draft technology – are needed at the plant. SNCR helps lower nitrogen oxide emissions, which cause haze, and it's an EPA requirement for San Juan.

Balanced draft, meanwhile, will provide better control of air flow through boilers, allowing PNM to further reduce particulate emissions from leaky ducts and piping. It's the balanced draft technology that opponents are challenging.

PNM says balanced draft is required under the plant's air quality permit approved by the state Environment Department for the power plant. It's also justified to better enable San Juan to comply with EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Control Standards, PNM spokeswoman Susan Sponar told the **Journal**.

But in a Dec. 9 email to PRC staff, the head of the state Environment Department's Air Quality Bureau, Richard Goodyear, disputed those claims. The email was obtained by the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy through the Inspection of Public Records Act.

"Please note that PNM's assertion that the state of New Mexico required the balanced draft conversion is incorrect," Goodyear wrote in the email. "PNM's request to implement the balanced draft project was entirely voluntary and only appears in the air quality permit because PNM requested the inclusion of the project in their air quality application."

"As PNM was in compliance with ambient applicable air quality standards in effect prior to the proposed installation of the balanced draft project, it should be noted that the project is not required to comply with any applicable ambient air standard."

In response to Goodyear's email, PNM confirmed that it proposed balanced draft as part of its permitting application in 2011 to "best address" issues regarding the emission of particulate matter, and to improve its ability to meet air quality standards.

"PNM worked proactively with the New Mexico Environment Department to propose a solution balancing the interests of customers and the environment," Sponar said in an email to the **Journal** on Monday.

Environmental organizations say the extra costs for balanced draft is unjustified, since it's not required to meet state or federal regulations.

New Mexico ratepayers would bear the lion's share of the extra expense, since as majority owner at San Juan, PNM will pay \$92 million, or nearly 60 percent of the total \$157 million in pollution control costs. That includes \$24 million for SNCR and \$68 million for balanced draft.

"PNM is saying balanced draft will help them meet fugitive emissions standards, but nobody ever said they were out of compliance with those standards," said Chuck Noble, attorney for the Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy. "That makes it look like PNM is just putting this investment in to pad its rate base, which allows it to earn more profits."

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EARTHQUAKES:

Shaken more than 560 times, Okla. is top state for quakes in 2014

Mike Soraghan, E&E reporter

EnergyWire: Monday, January 5, 2015

Oklahoma had a fivefold surge in earthquakes last year, making it by far the most seismically active state in the Lower 48.

The Sooner State was shaken by 564 quakes of magnitude 3 and larger, compared with only 100 in 2013, according to an *EnergyWire* analysis of federal earthquake data. California, which is twice the size of Oklahoma, had fewer than half as many quakes.

Researchers and many people in the state believe the quakes are linked to oil and gas activity, namely deep-underground disposal of drilling waste fluid.

"Who'd have ever thought we'd start having so many earthquakes out here in the middle of the country?" asked Max Hess, a county commissioner in Grant County, which had 135 quakes last year. He also thinks the quakes are related to oil and gas, which has been an economic boon for the rural county northwest of Oklahoma City.

"It's been good," Hess said of the drilling, "but it's got its drawbacks."

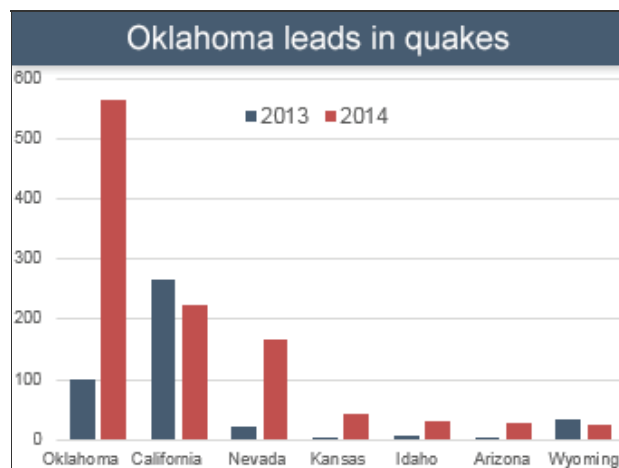
But many in Oklahoma, where 1 out of every 6 jobs is linked to oil and gas, have been slow to embrace a connection, even as the pace of earthquakes has picked up and complaints have grown louder.

"I think a lot of it has to do with the drought," said fellow Grant County Commissioner Cindy Bobbitt, "with maybe the disposal mixed in."

From 1975 to 2008, Oklahoma averaged one to three quakes of magnitude 3 or greater a year, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Then the number began to rise. There were 20 such quakes in 2009.

The link between earthquakes and drilling in Oklahoma has been actively discussed since at least November 2011, when the state was hit by its largest recorded quake. Centered near Prague, the magnitude-5.7 rupture injured two people and damaged more than 200 homes and businesses.

In May, the Oklahoma Geological Survey and USGS said the spike in the number of earthquakes meant it was much more likely that the state could suffer a damaging earthquake of magnitude 5.5 or greater (*EnergyWire*, May 6, 2014). The joint announcement said deep injection of wastewater was a "likely contributing factor."



Oklahoma had more earthquakes last year than any other state in the Lower 48. Data courtesy of the U.S. Geological Society.

The Oklahoma Corporation Commission, which oversees oil and gas in the state, last year adopted what it calls the "traffic light" approach. Disposal wells in a swarm area within 6 miles of the center of a quake of magnitude 4 or greater are put in "yellow light" status. They get special scrutiny. The commission has temporarily shut down at least six disposal wells so they can be brought back into compliance.

EnergyWire's review of earthquake data looked at onshore earthquakes of magnitude 3 or greater, because that is the strength at which most earthquakes in the United States can be felt and reliably recorded. There are more seismic monitors on the East and West coasts, so many smaller earthquakes are recorded in those areas.

The review indicates that Oklahoma's seismic action has been spreading north into Kansas, which had only two earthquakes in 2013 but 42 in 2014. Most were

near the Oklahoma border.

The number of quakes also jumped in Colorado, where a disposal well was temporarily shut down in 2014 after an earthquake. In Texas, where scientists have also linked quakes to drilling, earthquakes declined last year.

Scientists generally judge Alaska separately. Alaska had more than 2,600 quakes last year, more than all other states

Scientists generally judge Alaska separately. Alaska had more than 2,000 quakes last year, more than all other states combined.

OK with shaking

In Oklahoma, 19 of the quakes were magnitude 4 or greater, the strength at which experts say significant damage can occur.

Bobbitt, the Grant County commissioner, said people in her rural county talk a lot about the earthquakes but take them in stride. After all, they're less destructive than tornadoes, and if they are related to oil and gas, the drilling boom is bringing in money and jobs.

"I can count on one hand the number of people who have called me" about earthquakes, Bobbitt said. "You get a little income from something and you're more OK with it."

Closer to Oklahoma City, state Rep. Jason Murphey said his constituents are more rattled by the shaking. He's a Republican from Guthrie, north of the city along Interstate 35.

"You start seeing the emails come in when you get to the 4.0 range," said Murphey, who hosted a contentious town hall meeting on quakes in June ([EnergyWire](#), June 27, 2014). "Some are worried there'll be a really big one. Others are mad about a crack in their wall."

But others in the area take it in stride, too, if the remarks on the Guthrie News Page on Facebook are any guide.

"It's almost becoming routine," one commenter said after an early morning quake on Dec. 28. "Our family only brings it up any more if it is a particularly strong one. Ho-hum."

Twitter: [@MikeSoraghan](#) | Email: msoraghan@eenews.net

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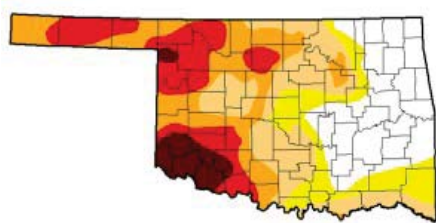
Duncan Bans All Outdoor Watering as Waurika Lake Levels Continue to Fall

JANUARY 5, 2015 | 10:47 AM

BY [LOGAN LAYDEN](#)

The drought in southwest Oklahoma has lingered for more than four years now, and it will take more than a wet end to 2014 to stop it — a lot more.

Despite [receiving above average](#) December precipitation, the City of Duncan will ban all outdoor watering beginning next week. That's because water levels in Waurika Lake, Duncan's only current drinking water source, continue to drop.



U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR

The December 30, 2014 update of the U.S. Drought Monitor for Oklahoma.

From *The Duncan Banner's* [Rachel Snyder](#):

Outside watering includes watering of lawns or plants, as well as washing cars, hosing down streets and sidewalks or filling of pools.

City Manager Jim Frieda said the most recent data indicates Waurika Lake's municipal water supply is at 29.9 percent capacity, which prompted Stage 5 restrictions effective Wednesday. Waurika Lake is currently the city's sole source of drinking water.

When StateImpact visited Duncan in September, Waurika Lake was 32 percent full.

At the time, Public Works Director Scott Vaughn said the lake was "about a year's worth of rainfall behind," and while the city owns rights to water in four other area lakes, they, too, have been severely affected by drought.

Duncan shares the water in Waurika Lake with other communities, including Lawton, which is looking underground to meet its future water needs in the face of the drought.

"In the past the city of Lawton had groundwater, but for the last 40 years or so, Lawton has relied on surface water," the City of Lawton's Afsaneh Jabbar told StateImpact in September. "Now we're looking at groundwater to see if that's an option for us."

The Waurika Lake Conservancy District [estimates the lake could be too low](#) to use as a water source by the middle of 2016 if the drought continues.

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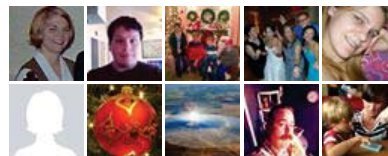
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Raw Gas Fuels Worry for Rural Homeowner

by Jim Malewitz and Max B. Baker | Jan. 6, 2015



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photo by : Star-Telegram/Joyce Marshall

Some rural Texans, including Jon Salis, have been getting untreated natural gas that can freeze up and, in rare cases, pollute homes. Salis poses at the gas line near his Lake Palo Pinto property.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Transcript: Railroad Commission Hearing

[PDF \(350.7 KB\) download](#)

Atmos: Brief In Railroad Commission Hearing

[PDF \(4.8 MB\) download](#)

Salis: Closing Brief in Railroad Commission Hearing

[PDF \(10.0 MB\) download](#)

SANTOS – A stiff winter wind smacks into the plate-glass windows of Jon Salis' Lake Palo Pinto home as six space heaters work overtime to keep it warm.

Natural gas used to keep his 2,100-square-foot house cozy. In fact, Atmos Energy's gas service was one reason Salis

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Top Texas Officials on Hand as Paxton is Sworn In

decided to remodel a lakeshore cabin about 80 miles west of Arlington, and move here in 2001.

Not anymore.

Last summer, Salis learned that the natural gas flowing through his pipes isn't the fully processed, clean-burning fuel that most Texans picture. Rather, it's what he calls a "raw gas cocktail," tapped from a pipeline that runs beneath the lake on its way to a processing plant.

The more Salis learned about the gas coming into his home, the more scared he became. Finally, Salis just turned off his furnace.



"I don't want to be on this gas," he said. "I want to be off it as quick as I can."

Salis' neighborhood was hooked up to a natural gas pipeline decades ago through what's called a "farm tap." In years past, many utilities and landowners considered it easiest and cheapest to hook up rural homes to nearby pipelines that carry mostly raw fuel from gas fields to processing plants.

Known as "wet gas" because it contains higher concentrations of **liquids such as ethane and butane**, the unprocessed gas is prone to freezing in cold weather and, in rare cases, can corrode appliances, causing them to misfire and potentially emit carbon monoxide, according to documents filed with the Texas Railroad Commission.

No one knows how many Texas customers are hooked up to wet gas. The Railroad Commission regulates natural gas utilities and the state's 426,000-mile network of natural gas, hazardous liquid and other pipelines, but doesn't set standards for the gas pumped through them.

Atmos, which serves more than 1.5 million customers in its Mid-Tex division, said that fewer than 200 rely on wet gas. The gas is ill suited to power homes, Atmos employees testified at a Railroad Commission hearing in September. But the company does not consider it "dangerous," and none of its customers have reported related health problems, it told The Texas

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Tribune and the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

“Safety is our number one priority,” Jennifer Altieri, an Atmos spokeswoman, said in an email. “Like with any utility service there is a risk things can go wrong. But there are thousands of people who live in Texas that are fully aware of the risks of wet gas and yet still choose to utilize it as an energy source for their homes.”

But Salis and his attorney, Michelle McFaddin, think Atmos and other utilities should be more upfront about the risks of using wet gas – even if some experts describe them as small.

“No one is looking at this,” said McFaddin, a former assistant director of enforcement at the Railroad Commission. “The problem in my mind is, serving it to customers who don’t know what they’re getting.”



For the most part, the Railroad Commission focuses its health and safety efforts on the condition of the pipelines rather than the gas pumped through them. Texas law does not spell out standards for the quality of gas delivered to homes.

Most residential gas is stripped of troublesome liquids in processing. But thousands of landowners over the decades negotiated to tap into raw gas when they allowed pipeline companies to build across their property.

“The people, when they got it, were aware of the conditions,” said Bill Fowler, an attorney in Odessa who has represented pipeline companies. “A long time ago, they would strap a meter on anybody’s house.”

Now, Atmos and other utilities are seeking permission to turn off farm taps and convert neighborhoods to other fuels. In 2009, utilities filed seven applications to abandon wet gas service, according to Railroad Commission data. Last year, the agency received at least 23. In most cases, the companies call the services too expensive to maintain.

But the companies occasionally face pushback from landowners. Some argue that shutting off service would violate contracts. Others simply don’t want to switch to other fuels.

And at least one landowner [told Atmos in another case](#) that he wasn't convinced that unprocessed gas was dangerous.

"Atmos Energy cannot simply cease utility service to these customers," Altieri said. "It first must obtain approval from the Railroad Commission, a process that can be long and drawn out especially when the company is met with opposition."

The opposition included Salis – at first.

He was alone among the nine homeowners in his subdivision to object when [Atmos asked regulators](#) for permission to shut off service. Atmos doesn't own the pipeline, which has changed hands over the years, but it owns the taps, meters and right to use it. The service connections "were made at a time when wet gas service was viewed more favorably," Atmos said.

Salis' eight neighbors readily accepted Atmos' offer last year to replace any gas-powered appliances with electric or propane items, which is cheaper than hooking up the subdivision to another natural gas pipeline. Salis rejected the deal, saying he wanted the company to consider hooking up his subdivision to alternative fuels. But he changed his tune after learning more about unprocessed gas in the Railroad Commission hearing that followed.

Jesse Garcia, an operations supervisor for Atmos, [testified](#) that the gas was "not suitable for residential use" and described its potential for freezing. During cross examination, he said the gas had been "non-quality" ever since customers first requested service and can cause a "very irregular flame burning in your appliances" that could give off carbon monoxide.

Garcia also testified that Atmos had not systematically told customers of those risks, but technicians may have done so during individual service calls to the area. The subdivision made 129 such calls in a year's span, according to hearing documents, and that high number was likely due to the poor quality of the gas.

"It took everything I had to keep from blowing up," Salis said, recalling the hearing. "I was sitting there boiling in the chair listening to these guys."

McFaddin said she was "dumbfounded" to hear the testimony, which echoes analysis by other experts. A 2005 [Natural Gas Council white paper](#), for instance, says using wet gas in homes

can cause “soot formation, elevated levels of carbon monoxide and pollutant emissions,” as well as “nuisance shutdowns from extinguished pilots or tripping of safety switches.”

Michelle Foss, chief energy economist for the University of Texas at Austin’s Center for Energy Economics, said such hazards are real but uncommon, and that many home appliances can handle the more energy-rich wet gas.

Fowler said the overall safety record of unprocessed gas service is “exceptionally good.” He’s also never heard of carbon monoxide being a problem with the farm taps.

Salis wants the Railroad Commission to make Atmos notify all remaining wet gas customers of the fuel’s risk, a demand the company has resisted. “Atmos Energy believes a general communication regarding the risks of wet natural gas would create more questions and confusion,” it said in an [October brief](#).

The Railroad Commission will decide if Atmos can abandon the service in the coming months. Salis said that day can’t come soon enough, but when all is said and done, he wonders how many others may be in the same predicament and not know it.

“I turn on my water and it turns brown, so I know there’s a problem. But with gas being invisible and odorless, your assumption is if it lights my furnace and water heater, it is okay,” Salis said. “I see a big hole in the system.”

This story was jointly reported by The Texas Tribune and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

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Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - A third man has died of injuries suffered in a December explosion at an oil rig in southern Oklahoma.

The wife of Mark Pittman told reporters that Pittman died during the weekend at an Oklahoma City hospital where he was taken following the Dec. 19 explosion and fire at the rig near Coalgate. Two workers died in the blast and subsequent fire and two more were injured.

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration is investigating the explosion.

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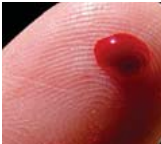
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